United Nations A/56/958

General Assembly

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22 May 2002
English
Original: Arabic

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 98
Environment and sustainable development

Letter dated 22 May 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the Dubai Declaration on Integrated Water Resource Management in Arid Regions adopted by the Dubai International Conference on Integrated Management of Water Resources in the Third Millennium, held from 2 to 6 February 2002 under the patronage of His Highness General Sheikh Mohamed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Minister of Defence of the United Arab Emirates and sponsor of the Zayed International Prize for the Environment.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 98.

(*Signed*) Abdulaziz Bin Nasser **Al-Shamsi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

02-39635 (E) 280502 290502

Annex to the letter dated 22 May 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic and English]

Dubai Declaration on Integrated Water Resource Management in Arid Regions

Dubai, 5 February 2002

The participants of the Dubai International Conference on Integrated Management of Water Resources in the Third Millennium, comprising Ministers and senior government officials, representatives of United Nations organizations, the scientific community, the private sector, NGOs and the media, meeting in Dubai on 2-6 February 2002 under the patronage of His Highness General Sheikh Mohamed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Minister of Defense, UAE, Patron of the Zayed Prize for the Environment:

Emphasizing that water is life; a key element of sustainable development; essential to the maintenance of the hydrological, biological and chemical functions of ecosystems; a social and economic good vital for food security, poverty alleviation and income generation. Conflicts over water are a major threat to peace and stability, especially in arid regions of the world;

Affirming that all human societies depend on ecosystems, which are of vital importance to the poorest communities in providing valuable goods and services;

Stressing that adequate water flows are necessary for environmental services to maintain ecosystem functions, through conserving river stretches, wetlands, floodplains, estuaries and watersheds;

Recognizing that the recommendations of Chapter 18 of Agenda 21 adopted at the Rio Summit in 1992 (UNCED) for a sustainable water future have not yet been achieved;

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration in which governments committed themselves to double the number of people with access to safe drinking water and to stop the unsustainable exploitation of water resources through the development of water management strategies;

Recognizing that the Ministerial Declaration of the Second World Water Forum and the World Commission on Dams have demonstrated that people and governments of different and sometimes opposing views can converge on constructive alternatives and form new partnerships on water resources management that go beyond sectoral approaches;

Reaffirming the recommendations of the Bonn International Conference on Freshwater on priority actions in the areas of governance, mobilizing financial resources and capacity-building and sharing knowledge;

Recalling that the joint African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) and the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment

(CAMRE) Declaration on Sustainable Development identified sound management of water resources as essential for humankind, ecosystem health and food security;

Propose that the following principles and considerations should be incorporated into the deliberations and resolutions of the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg 2002;

Water resources development should be based on optimal solutions for all users within catchment basins, including protecting water rights, providing sufficient amounts of clean water for domestic and other uses; recognizing the needs and the special circumstances of the indigenous peoples and the poor;

National Water Resource Policies require integrated strategies and plans for the conservation, risk assessment, and management of all sector allocations, especially for irrigation, taking into consideration the socio-economic cost of producing and delivering water based on "renewability" and sustainable use;

Further research and development is needed on non-conventional sources of water, such as treated wastewater, brackish and saline water, including cost-effective desalination and water harvesting; and on models to address the hydrologic and economic ramifications of changing water use;

Better understanding is needed of the hydrological cycle in arid regions, and of the critical relationships between water resources management, climate change, desertification and the conservation of biodiversity;

Comprehensive monitoring programmes and databases, linked to existing global observation and assessment initiatives, should be developed on transfers of water and dissolved solids within the hydrological cycle; hydrologic and chemical stresses; and the various uses of water in major catchment basins, in order to achieve demand-based, multi-stakeholder water management strategies;

Developed countries have a responsibility to meet their commitments to provide financial support to developing countries, which should include the transfer of water resource development technologies, as well as research into developing more drought and salt resistant plants. Developing countries in arid regions have a responsibility to maintain and further develop their traditional water management practices and institutions, incorporating sustainable new approaches and technologies;

Public awareness, education and capacity-building in the areas of monitoring, assessment and management of water resources should be strengthened, giving special attention and support to the needs of developing countries;

Participatory approaches to water resource management should be promoted, emphasizing the important roles of all stakeholders, especially women;

Declare also that the United Nations is the appropriate forum for the resolution of water related conflicts as well as for the elaboration of policies, guidelines and programmes for water management at global, regional and national levels;

Call on governments, within this framework, to work with each other and with all stakeholders to act as a matter of urgency, to develop and implement integrated water management strategies.

United Nations A/56/959

General Assembly

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22 May 2002

Original: English

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 12
Report of the Economic and Social Council

Letter dated 21 May 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the final communiqué of the International Conference on e-Government for Development, held in Palermo on 11 April 2002 (see annex). The Conference was organized by the Government of Italy, with the support of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the special meeting of the General Assembly on information and communication technologies for development, to be held on 17 and 18 June 2002.

(*Signed*) Sergio **Vento**

02-39574 (E) 040602

Annex to the letter dated 21 May 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

International Conference on e-Government for Development

Final Communiqué

11th April 2002

Palazzo dei Normanni - Palermo, Italy

The International Conference on e-Government for Development organized by the Government of Italy with the support of the United Nations was held on 10 and 11 April 2002 in Palermo. It gathered over 500 high-level participants from government, civil society and business from more than 90 countries. International organizations were also represented at the highest level.

The event was opened by Mr. Lucio Stanca, Minister for Innovation and Technology of the Government of Italy, H.E. Ivan Simonovic, President of ECOSOC, Mr. Nitin Desai, Under Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, Mr. YoshioUtsumi, Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union, Mr. Peter Harder, Deputy Minister of Industry Canada and President of the DOT Force. It was closed by H.E. Pascal Affi N'Guessan, Prime Minister ofIvory Coast, H.E. Pandeli Majko, Prime Minister of Albania, H.E. Pascoal Mocumbi, Prime Minister of Mozambique, H.E. Muhammad al-Ghanoushe, Prime Minister of Tunisia and H.E. Silvio Berlusconi, Prime Minister of Italy.

The International Conference is part of the Italian Initiative on e-Government for Development, a multi-million effort that combines advocacy with funding development projects. For its implementation, the Government of Italy has established with the United Nations a Trust Fund that in its initial phase will finance e-Government projects in Albania, Jordan, Mozambique, Nigeria and Tunisia. The Government of Italy, by signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the World Bank, has also agreed to become a funding member of the Development Gateway Foundation.

The Conference explored the potential of applications of information and communication technology (ICT) in government operations. It also provided a platform for the members of the GB Digital Opportunity Task Force (DOT Force) and the United Nations Information and Communication Technology Task Force (UN TCT Task Force) to debate major issues related to bridging the digital divide and spreading the benefits of the digital revolution all over the world.

Participants focused on the promise that ICT applications carry for good governance, economic growth and human development. They had the opportunity to examine the impact of ICT applications in public administration by reviewing over 40 international best practices.

The Conference recognized that the growing integration of the world economy and the increasing importance of knowledge in people's work and life create new expectations and demands with relation to government operations. They relate to efficiency I effectiveness, transparency and accountability. The demonstration effect of best practices in each of these areas is widely available and people from all parts of the world have started to-demand that they become part of their life experience. More and more this process challenges all governments regardless of the level of their development.

The Conference confirmed that as governments undergo transformation to respond to this challenge, introduction of ICT to their operations proves revolutionary. It can lower the cost of reform and increase its effectiveness in Unprecedented ways. This led to experimentation with multitude of useful ITC applications in government operations. They are noteworthy for their capacity to improve the fiscal position of governments, to increase confidence of investors, trade partners and donors, and to win greater trust of the public at large. They have the potential to dramatically broaden political participation, to increase access to information about the ways in which governments operate, to helping knowledge acquisition and utilization. The most valuable among them empower people, raise their capabilities, and expand their access to life choices and opportunities. As such, they are as much about enhancing public administration as about improving the ways in which a society governs itself. E-Government facilitates good governance, the cornerstone of the vision of a peaceful, prosperous and just world, as outlined in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, adopted by Heads of States and Governments in September 2000.

The political momentum behind transformation of government and governance is not equally pronounced the world over. Levels of leadership, policies, laws, regulations, strategic public investments, education, including ITC education, and connectivity differ. Furthermore, the willingness to share experiences and mobilize resources needs decisions and catalytic actions. These must be rooted in solidarity with the disadvantaged countries and groups of population, in respect for diversity of cultures and recognition of the importance of a fully participatory approach.

This understanding underpins the activities of the United Nations that through the decisions of the Economic and Social Council and the initiatives of the Secretary-General aims at bringing the benefits of ITC to all people in the

world and at putting them at the service of poverty reduction. This understanding underpins also the activities of the G8 that during its recent Summit Meetings in Okinawa (2000) and Genoa (2001) confirmed the will of the most developed countries to bridge the digital divide.

In view of the above, the Conference recognized that:

e-Government initiatives should be measured by the degree to which they contribute to good governance, empowering people, raising human capabilities and increasing people's access to life choices and opportunities.

e-Government initiatives and projects must be put in the context of broad government reform and transformation process that aims at increased efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of government operations.

e-Government initiatives must be put in the context of a broad enabling environment, in which leadership, education and connectivity constitute the indispensable ingredients.

e-Government initiatives based on international cooperation must be participatory in their design and implementation, build on the existing local strengths and capacities and be respectful of local culture and traditions.

Building an e-Government should be a gradual process in which broad support is won by clear demonstration of advantages of ITC application to government operations in areas of public interest.

These principles should be reflected in the Plan of Action on e-Government for Development to be presented at the next G8 Summit.

Finally, the participants recognized the Conference as a milestone in the global dialogue on ITC for development. This dialogue must be continued and the forthcoming G8 Summit in Canada (Kananaskis, 2002) and the World Summit on the Information Society (Geneva, 2003 and Tunis, 2005) will provide such an opportunity. They also recognized the Italian Initiative as an important, concrete follow up to the Monterrey Consensus on development assistance and invite the donor community to join this Initiative to maximize and widen its impact.

Participants expressed their gratitude to the Government of Italy and the United Nations, organizers of the Conference, as well as to the Region of Sicily, the Province of Palermo and the Municipality of Palermo for their warm hospitality.

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General Assembly
Security Council

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General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session
Agenda items 81 and 166

Security Council
Fifty-seventh year

Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 14 May 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On 6 May 2002 the Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security of the United States of America delivered a speech to the ultra-conservative Heritage Foundation in which he made odious accusations against Cuba, claiming that the country was involved in the development of biological weapons research and development programmes.

These slanderous allegations by Mr. John Bolton were met with an adequate and timely response from the Government of the Republic of Cuba in a statement issued by President Fidel Castro Ruz on 10 May 2002, a copy of which I have the honour to transmit herewith (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 81 and 166.

(*Signed*) Bruno **Rodríguez Parrilla**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

02-39721 (E) 310502 040602

Annex to the letter dated 14 May 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Spanish]

Reply dated 10 May 2002 from Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and President of the Republic of Cuba, to the statements made by the Government of the United States of America concerning biological weapons

Barely three days ago, an individual all too familiar to us, Assistant Secretary of State Otto Reich, was caught out in an embarrassing lie when he said that four Cuban aircraft had landed in the Venezuelan capital on 12 April and that nobody knew "what they were doing there, what they were carrying, we don't know". Apparently, this was the beginning of an anti-Cuba campaign or an attempt at revenge for the stunning failure of the fascist coup he had set in motion, or both.

On Tuesday, 7 May, when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs challenged him publicly, the State Department said that it had no confirmation whatsoever and that it did not wish to discuss the subject further.

The idea of destroying Cuba, an obsession that has lasted for more than 43 years, has led and continues to lead United States policy down a torturous path strewn with lies, mistakes, failures and miscalculations. What the United States Government is telling the world today and what it is doing with Cuba is perhaps the most grievous and demoralizing contradiction in its foreign policy. Never has the great Power found itself in such a compromising position, and it has no alternative but to lie, lie and lie again. And to do this it has no shortage of unscrupulous characters in high public offices, or of press spokespersons caught up in the constant bitter need to correct mistakes and explain the unexplainable in their bosses' statements.

Even men like Colin Powell, a son of Jamaican immigrants who, despite his military training or maybe because of it, is not considered a hawk because he knows war and has seen men die, a man whom many Americans even came to look on as a potential candidate for president, has found himself implicated by such people in embarrassing intrigues that do little to enhance his standing. He, more than anyone else, knows how little experience and how little intellectual and political worth these people have.

Who can be deceived by this new character who is waging a shady campaign against Cuba? The man in question is John Bolton, the Under Secretary of State for Arms Control no less. What is the purpose of the attack launched by this official in an aggressive anti-Cuban speech delivered at the Heritage Foundation, which is famous for its ultra-right-wing stance?

This statement, ostensibly an analysis of the dangers of terrorism threatening the United States, began by saying: "In addition to Libya and Syria, there is a threat coming from another BWC signatory, and one that lies just 90 miles from the U.S. mainland — namely, Cuba".

Then, after the usual name-calling and hate-filled idiocies commonly associated with the arrogant and the misinformed, Mr. Bolton added his own personal touch:

> "We know that Cuba is collaborating with other State sponsors of terror.
>
> "Castro has repeatedly denounced the U.S. war on terrorism. He continues to view terror as a legitimate tactic to further revolutionary objectives. Last year, Castro visited Iran, Syria and Libya — all designees on the same list of terrorist-sponsoring States. At Tehran University these were his words: 'Iran and Cuba, in cooperation with each other, can bring America to its knees. The U.S. regime is very weak, and we are witnessing this weakness from close up'.
>
> "But Cuba's threat to our security often has been underplayed. An official U.S. Government report in 1998 concluded that Cuba did not represent a significant military threat to the United States or the region. It went only so far as to say that 'Cuba has a limited capacity to engage in some military and intelligence activities which could pose a danger to U.S. citizens under some circumstances'."

Mr. Bolton immediately sought to cover up the suspicious fact that no United States official had ever thought to level such shameful accusations against Cuba. He blames this weakness on William Cohen, who was Secretary of Defence four years ago, when the report under attack was issued. Mr. Bolton made no mention at all of the fact that scarcely five months and two weeks earlier, on 19 November 2001, he had not even mentioned Cuba in a statement he had delivered to the conference of the States parties to the Biological Weapons Convention in Geneva, in which he had cited many countries that worried him as potential producers of biological weapons. What was the reason for this sudden change?

Mr. Bolton's piece of tabloid journalism of 6 May concludes:

> "For decades Cuba has maintained a well-developed and sophisticated biomedical industry, supported until 1990 by the Soviet Union. This industry is one of the most advanced in Latin America, and leads in the production of pharmaceuticals and vaccines that are sold worldwide. Analysts and Cuban defectors have long cast suspicion on the activities conducted in these biomedical facilities.
>
> "Here is what we now know: the United States believes that Cuba has at least a limited offensive biological warfare research and development effort. Cuba has provided dual-use biotechnology to other rogue States. We are concerned that such technology could support BW programmes in those States. We call on Cuba to cease all BW-applicable cooperation with rogue States and to fully comply with all of its obligations under the Biological Weapons Convention."

The international press was quick to pick up Mr. Bolton's string of Olympic-sized lies, which is exactly what he wanted:

> **"Washington, 6 May (ANSA)**. Under Secretary of State John Bolton today accused Cuba of helping 'enemy Governments' with biological weapons programmes.

"'Cuba had at least an offensive biological weapons programme and could be transferring its results to other States hostile to the United States', Bolton said.

"The Under Secretary Bolton spoke to the Heritage Foundation, one of the ultra-conservative groups in Washington."

"**Washington, 6 May (DPA)**. The United States today accused Cuba of developing offensive biological weapons and of providing information about them to States hostile to the United States, and urged President Fidel Castro's Government to cease this cooperation."

"**Washington, 6 May (REUTERS)**. On Monday, the United States accused three countries — Cuba, Libya and Syria — of trying to develop weapons of mass destruction and warned that it would take steps to prevent them from supplying these arms to terrorist groups.

"'States that sponsor terror and pursue weapons of mass destruction must stop. States that renounce terror and abandon WMD can become part of our effort. But those who do not can expect to become our targets.'"

"**Washington, 6 May (EFE)**. The United States today added Cuba to Syria and Libya on the list of countries who are part of the 'axis of evil' dedicated to manufacturing weapons of mass destruction, and warned that it would take steps to prevent them from supplying such weapons to terrorist organizations."

"**Washington, 6 May (NOTIMEX)**. The United States today included Cuba in the so-called 'axis of evil' because it thinks it has the capacity to develop biological weapons which are a threat to United States security, a greater threat than that from Iraq, Iran and North Korea."

"**Washington, 6 May (AFP)**. On Monday, the United States warned Cuba against any proliferation of biological weapons, urging the Havana Government to cease providing any kind of biotechnological equipment to countries that Washington considers dangerous, such as Iraq and Libya."

The list and the extent of articles and reports on the subject could go on forever.

And so the job has been done! The entire world, especially the American public, which is constantly being bombarded with perfidious lies, has been told and is ready to believe that Cuba is a biological Power, that it has a programme for producing such weapons and that it poses a danger to the United States. And since John Bolton, the very distinguished Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, has said it, we must believe it.

An outworn ploy and a ridiculous argument

However, as the old saying goes, "lies have short legs". Even in the United States there are people who are astounded and who are beginning to read between the lines.

"**Washington, 6 May (NOTIMEX)**. The United States today refused to produce the evidence it had claimed to have to back up the accusations made against Cuba.

"Both, the White House and State Department spokesmen said that the accusation against Cuba is not based on assumptions but on confidential information about the biological and chemical potential of the Cuban pharmaceutical industry.

"This accusation took not only the international community by surprise but also members of the United States Congress.

According to the same dispatch, "political analysts pointed out that the accusation against Cuba made by President George W. Bush's administration could be part of a White House strategy to find a justification for tightening its isolationist policy on Cuba.

"The statement that Cuba could pose a terrorist threat to the security of the United States was made at a time when several proposals to relax Washington's Cuba policy are being analysed on Capital Hill.

"Nevertheless, political analysts maintain that in view of this and bearing in mind that his brother Jeb will be seeking re-election as Governor of Florida this year, President Bush wants to ingratiate himself with the Cuban exile community.

"Given the fact that more than four decades of economic blockade against Cuba have not removed Fidel Castro from power in Havana, the only people who want this isolationist policy to remain in effect and harder are the vast majority of the Cuban exile community in the United States.

"The possibility of including Cuba as a member of the so-called 'axis of evil' with Iraq, Iran and North Korea at the head would make it easier for Bush to obtain Congressional backing for increasing instead of reducing the economic stranglehold on the Island."

"**Washington, 6 May (AP)**. 'I think that it will delay us taking new steps towards a trade opening', said Graham, chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. 'Unilateral steps will be most affected'.

"Graham, however, did not hide his amazement at Bolton's accusation. He said that in March the Committee he chairs held a secret hearing on security related issues and the administration made no mention of biological weapons."

On 7 May, when a journalist asked White House spokesman Ari Fleischer, "Is there any proof of this, or is this an assumption of the United States?", Fleischer replied, "No, it's not an assumption. I assure you that Secretary Bolton would not have said it if he did not have good cause, reason and fact to say it. That was based on sound analysis, and on information that is studied and available to the United States Government."

This reply is typical of someone who is launching an absolutely baseless and groundless accusation. The only thing that has been carefully thought out is the lies and deceit. It is indeed a sad role that this spokesman has. Furthermore, why should we believe Mr. Bolton? No one who remembers the 15 incredible pretexts, familiar today from declassified official documents, that were devised late in 1961 by senior United States officials in order to launch a direct military attack against Cuba in 1962, will be surprised by such a sinister lie. We demand proof. Let them produce

even the smallest shred of evidence! They have no proof, and they cannot because such proof simply does not and cannot exist. Let them not hide behind the alleged sensitivity of their sources when there is not even one atom of truth in what they are saying. This outworn ploy and ridiculous argument only serve to demonstrate their lack of consideration for and low opinion of the American people, whose intelligence deserves more respect.

I will also say this: if a Cuban scientist from any of our biotechnology institutes had been cooperating with any country in the development of biological weapons, or if he or she had tried to create such weapons on his or her own initiative, that scientist would have been brought before a court of justice immediately and charged with treason against the country.

Article 10 of the Law against Terrorist Acts passed by the National Assembly of Cuba stipulates: "Any person who manufactures, facilitates, sells, transports, sends, introduces into the country or keeps in his or her possession, in any form or place ... chemical or biological agents or any other substance from which any product can be derived through research, design or a combination thereof that meets this description" is liable to penalties of 10 to 30 years' imprisonment, life imprisonment or the death penalty.

This is truly an out and out lie, a treacherous blow against the sale of food to Cuba that was authorized by a law enacted in 2000 which was subsequently amended several times by staunch advocates of the blockade so that it became virtually impossible to apply the law even though it had been passed. This is also an attempt to mislead and discourage the growing number of Americans who are increasingly upset by this cruel and inhuman measure applied against the Cuban people, a measure which flies in the face of the idealism of a nation that has in fact been deceived for decades where Cuba is concerned.

The only truth in Bolton's lie is that Cuba is situated 90 miles from the continental territory of the United States.

A slanderous invention, born of lies and deceit

It is a false and twisted assertion that Cuba has repeatedly denounced the United States war on terrorism. I have said, and I stand by this, that the solution to this scourge is to be found not through war, which would only serve to breed hatred and fanaticism, but rather through sincere and determined cooperation among all countries of the world and the creation of a truly universal culture and awareness of combating terrorism. We were the first to propose such cooperation on the very day the tragedy occurred in New York.

It is a slanderous invention, born of lies and deceit, to say that Castro believes terrorism to be a legitimate tactic for furthering revolutionary objects, as everyone knows that our revolutionary movement never applied methods that were inconsistent with our doctrine, our principles and our concept of armed struggle. Mr. Bolton, you had better get your facts straight; don't let yourself be misled by the fantastic stories told by your dear friends at the Foundation. Never were the civilian population or innocent people the victims of our actions. Our tactic was always to fight against heavily equipped enemy units. Right now, you want to call any armed resistance terrorism, regardless of the legitimate causes that might justify it. Following this logic, one could apply such a definition to the struggle of the

American colonists who rebelled and fought against English domination. George Washington and those who won the independence of the United States of America after long years of war and enormous sacrifices were not terrorists.

Someone steered you wrong, Mr. Bolton, when they told you about my speech at the University of Tehran. It was not one speech but two, at two universities, and a few remarks made at the end of my visit to the mausoleum that houses the remains of Imam Khomeini. I have gone over both of them carefully. In my remarks to the students in Tehran, there is not one single paragraph that resembles the one you dishonestly included in your speech to the Heritage Foundation on 6 May. I never said that "Iran and Cuba, in cooperation with each other, can bring America to its knees". I did say, in one of the three speeches I gave during that visit, that imperialism was bereft of ideas, that ideas were more powerful than weapons and that one day, imperialism would crumble. I also said that the Shah "was overthrown by the people through heroism, without a single weapon, which demonstrates the power of ideas and that there is no one in the world so powerful that they cannot be overthrown by ideas. That is our hope". Lastly, I added: "There is a super-Power with thousands of nuclear weapons, aircraft, armoured vessels, aircraft carriers, smart missiles ... no matter how many weapons or how much wealth it has, it will not be able to overcome human beings".

I made not the slightest mention of the use of weapons in that struggle. In fact, I said just the opposite. This is what I think, that is how I saw it then and that is what I said. I am not in the habit of hiding my thoughts or manipulating my words. My speeches in the Iranian capital were broadcast on Cuban radio and television. Thus Mr. Bolton did not discover anything, and I do not renounce my ideas. I said some other things about doctrine and political principles. I have all the unedited tapes and transcripts of speeches, and I can prove what I said.

I should add that when I visited Iran, I had the honour to learn about a great country with a culture that goes back thousands of years, a country with deep religious beliefs and great spiritual strength, a country that seeks to eradicate poverty, combat drug trafficking and other such plagues and is determined to bring education, health, employment and well-being to more than 65 million people. Not one of the many leaders I talked to said anything to me about biological weapons or any other kind of weapon. What a vast difference I perceived between that culture and customs and those of the West. But I did not only visit that country, I also visited Algeria, Malaysia, Qatar, Syria and Libya, where they showed me how Qaddafi's family home had been destroyed and told of the loss of human life, including a little girl, caused by the brutal F-16 air raid.

Thousands of years of history are accumulated in those parts of the world, which must not be destroyed nor their people annihilated. Billions of people around the world have watched the televised images of the terrible events in Palestine with deep indignation.

Apparently, when Mr. Bolton alluded to my speech in Iran, he irresponsibly and dishonestly mixed excerpts of what I had said with fragments and statements of what other people had said to foreign press agencies, information from other sources obtained from wire-service cables or words of his own invention. The tangle he wove with these materials is incomprehensible even to him. My clear, precise and transparent statements can be found in the speeches I have mentioned and in the press communiqué issued on 10 May 2001 by both sides, in which, incidentally, the

Cuban position against terrorism is set out in paragraph 6 of the agreed document, which reads:

> "While condemning the phenomenon of terrorism in all its forms, especially State terrorism, the two parties agreed to cooperate closely at the bilateral and international levels to combat and eliminate this terrible phenomenon, to cooperate in the fight against international organized crime and drug trafficking, being always mindful of the cardinal principles of international law, and particularly those of sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States".

This statement was issued 127 days before 11 September.

I should like to thank Mr. Bolton for his praise of our pharmaceutical industry, "one of the most advanced in Latin America, [which] leads in the production of pharmaceuticals and vaccines that are sold worldwide" to use his own words. We only wish it were more advanced. Even his country could benefit from some of its discoveries, but they would not allow it. Yet, he lies shamelessly when he tells America and the world that the United States believes that Cuba is engaged in at least a limited offensive biological warfare research and development effort, a statement that is as false as it is serious.

Our researchers and doctors are educated to hold an elevated concept of solidarity and ethics, as billions of people around the world can testify. They work for the well-being and health of human beings. For 40 years, 34,307 Cuban medical doctors and health workers have provided services free of charge in a large number of poor countries, saving the lives and safeguarding the health of millions. No one in the world displays greater dedication or willingness to make sacrifices. At this very moment, 2,671 of them are working in isolated and inhospitable places in Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa. It would be very difficult to persuade these men and women to produce viruses and bacteria to kill children, women, the elderly or citizens of any country. The pride and high moral standards of our people, which has enabled it to withstand 43 years of aggression and embargoes, have their basis in the rationality of a policy that does not contradict their ethics or principles.

Some 39,800 young people from more than 120 third world countries have obtained degrees in 33 university and technical fields in Cuba. Even under the conditions obtaining during the special period, as a result of a cruel economic blockade, 8,053 young people from Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa are studying medicine in our country free of charge, studies that would cost more than $200,000 in the United States.

Despite Bolton's lies and those of many others like him, Cuba enjoys great prestige because of the health services it has provided to mankind. This is a true fight against terror in a form that many choose to ignore: the diseases that kill more than 11 million children every year, children whose lives could be saved were it not for the selfish attitude of the industrialized world. An incalculable number of people have survived or recovered their health thanks to the selfless work of the doctors who come from a poor small country and treat them with vaccines and preventive methods or therapies developed by Cuba. We should like to know if the United States Government is doing something similar, or if it would be prepared to cooperate in such programmes for the benefit of those it euphemistically describes

as emerging countries, as we have not excluded any economically developed nations from our programmes.

We have even offered hundreds of scholarships to American young people who lack the money to study medicine in their own country so that they might study at the Latin American School of Medical Sciences.

Cuban children are vaccinated against 13 diseases and enjoy wonderful health. The infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births is lower than that of the United States itself. Medical care is guaranteed to 100 per cent of the population absolutely free of charge. Unfortunately, in the United States, which has a population of over 280 million, 16 per cent do not have medical insurance, and that includes more than 10 million children. In such an immensely rich and scientifically advanced country, where hundreds of thousands of people die every year for these reasons, who is to blame? Who kills these people, and who denounces such facts? How can they invent, with what moral right can they make pronouncements from there, and who is going to believe the heinous slander that we Cubans are developing biological warfare programmes? On the other hand, never once during the 40 years of the Cuban Revolution has anyone launched or taken part in a terrorist act against the United States from our territory. Not one drop of United States blood has been shed, nor has any United States company lost so much as a single screw as a result of terrorist acts originating in Cuba. Those in the United States who accuse our country of terrorism or of supporting or sponsoring terrorism cannot say this. Thousands of our compatriots have died, and tens of thousands of acts of sabotage have been recorded in the context of terrorist acts or aggression perpetrated by the United States against Cuba. How can their spokespersons deny these facts? I am not referring to the American people; I am referring to their Governments. The overriding question of the powers given to United States government officials to carry extrajudicial executions and kill people anywhere in the world has yet to be clarified. I myself have often been the target of such sinister plans. This is how they operated in the past. Have they or have they not reverted to such revolting methods? Why doesn't Mr. Bolton tell us a little bit about this?

Cuba's policy on weapons of mass destruction is irreproachable

Cuba's policy on weapons of mass destruction has been irreproachable. No one has ever produced a single piece of evidence that any programme for the development of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons has been set up in our country. Those who lack a sense of ethics or fail to understand that the actions of the Cuban Government are governed by truth and transparency might at least understand that doing otherwise would have been incredibly foolish. Any such programme would bring the economy of any small country to bankruptcy. Cuba would never have been able to transport such weapons, and it would be a mistake to use them in battle against an enemy that had a thousand times more and that would be only too happy to find an excuse to use them.

From a political standpoint, we are living in an era in which there are and will be weapons much more powerful than any produced through technology — namely, the weapons of morality, reason and ideas. Without these, no country is weak, but without them, no nation is powerful. Adherence to this maxim requires exceptionally strong convictions, nerves of steel and talent. It should be known by now that, as far as the Cuban people is concerned, the values that inspire freedom,

dignity, love of one's homeland, its identity, culture, and justice in the strictest sense a man can imagine are more valuable than anything on earth. These are not weapons of mass destruction but weapons of mass moral defence, and we are willing to fight and die for them.

I understand that for a man like Mr. Bolton, intoxicated with the military, economic and technological might of the super-Power on whose behalf he speaks, it might not be easy to understand such things. However, it would be a good idea if he tried.

Cuba has absolutely nothing to hide. On the contrary, it is proud of its development in the biomedical research field.

I shall offer a brief historical summary:

- 1979: the Genetic Engineering Group was set up in the National Centre for Scientific Research;
- 1981: the first biotechnology scientific-productive institution devoted to producing alpha and beta interferon was founded;
- The medical-pharmaceutical and biotechnology industry programme: this came into being as a result of the scientific, economic and social development the country had achieved;
- Cuba met the standards for inspection and certification by international agencies and by the national regulatory agencies of those countries with which it was to have trade relations;
- The bulk of the investment programme is developed between 1990 and 1997, comprising 40 facilities;
- A completely humanitarian industry is developed to research and produce medicines for preventing disease and saving lives, as well as to increase food production;
- The purchase of technological equipment used worldwide from commercial companies with an international reputation;
- Under agreements concluded by Cuba pursuant to the Biological Weapons Convention, the Cuban biotechnology industry, health system and civil defence organizations submit an annual report to the United Nations on confidence-building measures;
- Many regulatory agencies from various countries have visited Cuban productive biotechnology facilities as a prerequisite for marketing our products in their countries;
- In the next few years, 50 new products will come on the market, including biopharmaceuticals, vaccines and diagnosis kits;
- Our country already has a stock of intellectual property consisting of more than 150 inventions and over 500 patents registered abroad. The results of scientific research are published in the most important international journals;
- 1990: Cuban products began to be exported, and exports have increased every year since then;

- 1992: Cuba signed the Convention on Biological Diversity, ratifying it in 1994;
- 1995: Landmark forms of marketing are introduced: technology transfers, at-risk development contracts with foreign companies, and production-commercial partnerships;
- Today, products and technology of the Cuban biotechnology industry are available in more than 40 countries.

Agreements for technology transfers or negotiations are currently under way with 14 countries:

India: 4 transfers, 4 products.

China: 2 transfers, 4 products.

Brazil: 2 transfers, 2 products.

Egypt: 4 transfers, 1 product under negotiation.

Malaysia: 6 transfers.

Iran: 4 transfers, 4 products.

Russia: 1 transfer, 1 product.

South Africa: 1 transfer, 1 product.

Tunisia: 1 transfer, 1 product.

Algeria: 1 transfer, 3 products.

Great Britain-Belgium: 1 transfer, 1 product.

Venezuela: 1 transfer, 2 products under negotiation.

Mexico: 1 transfer, 1 product.

New trade and production negotiations are under way with 10 countries:

Malaysia, Netherlands, Spain, Brazil, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Mexico, Ukraine, Germany and the United States of America (in this case negotiations over the use of the Cuban anti-meningitis vaccine and the first contacts for possible clinical trials with the EGF vaccine for lung cancer).

Cuban biotechnology centres have already registered:

24 products, both biopharmaceuticals and vaccines

49 cutting-edge generic medicines

5 products for treating AIDS

15 new medical equipment

24 diagnosis systems.

Building on these results, scientific research is now focusing on 60 projects.

Among the most significant new products that scientific researchers are trying to obtain are the following:

29 new vaccines including 8 cancer vaccines, 4 of which are in the clinical trial stage not only in Cuba but also in Canada, Argentina and England;

21 innovative products for treating cancer plus the 28 cytostatics already known, which a new plant will begin producing.

Cuban technology centres have filed for patents for 150 inventions, bringing our total number of patents registered to 505. Four of these patents have been awarded the Medal of the World Intellectual Property Organization.

Countless politicians, scientists and business persons have visited Cuban technology institutes. In 2000, 1,520 people visited just one of the most important centres; 484 of them came from the United States.

The doors of our research centres are open to any international institution.

In an official public note, Cuba has proposed three important draft agreements to the United States which are more beneficial for the United States than they are for Cuba, given the extent of the problems in each of the two countries: a draft agreement on immigration issues; a draft cooperation agreement to fight illegal trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; and a draft bilateral programme on cooperation to fight terrorism. To date we have received no reply whatsoever. Perhaps their reply is to accuse us of manufacturing biological weapons? Who do they think they can intimidate with that?

We are urged to stop any kind of cooperation applicable to biological weapons with "rogue" States and to meet all our obligations under the Biological Weapons Convention. What international organization decides whether a country is or is not a rogue State? What rule of the Biological Weapons Convention has Cuba violated? Is it perhaps that, on top of the criminal blockade, they are now trying to prevent us from marketing our medicines and using our most wholesome and noblest products, the fruit of the talent of our scientists, to place them at the service of any person's health anywhere in the world? Could it be that the United States Government wants to have a bilateral agreement in addition to those Cuba has proposed, namely, cooperation in the struggle against the production of biological weapons? It should say so, then. We would be willing to include such an agreement on our list of products pending a reply.

We are sorry, Mr. Bolton. After the lies, slanders, tales and insults you launched in your speech of 6 May, we are sorry to tell you that you lack any moral standing to preach to Cuba on this subject and even less to make any demand at all using a threatening tone and language. Neither can you pretend to teach Cuba any lesson in politics or ethics. In any event, you and your Government might draw inspiration from Cuba's decent and honourable behaviour. I can assure you that we will charge absolutely nothing for this technology transfer.